

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A character provision service system for providing characters to a user-side apparatus, said system comprising:

5 generation means for generating a character capable of making a designated motion; and

computation means for computing a charge for the character on the basis of the motion of the character.

10 2. A system according to claim 1, wherein said computation means performs the computation on the basis of the amount of movement of the motion.

15 3. A system according to claim 2, wherein the amount of movement is the number of frames in which a moving image of the character is displayed.

20 4. A system according to claim 1, wherein said computation means performs the computation on the basis of the period of time during which the motion is continued.

25 5. A system according to claim 1, wherein said computation means performs the computation on the basis of the number of parts moved in the motion.

6. A system according to claim 1, wherein said

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computation means performs the computation on the basis of the amount of change in the motion.

7. A system according to claim 1, wherein said
5 computation means performs the computation on the basis of a motion mode of the motion.

8. A system according to claim 7, wherein the
10 motion mode relates to a kind of expression of the character.

9. A system according to claim 7, wherein the
15 motion mode relates to a kind of method for a conversation held by the character.

10. A system according to claim 7, wherein the
motion mode relates to a kind of personality of the character.

20 11. A system according to claim 1 further comprising:

measuring means for measuring the motion of the character,

wherein said computation means performs the
25 computation on the basis of the measured motion of the character.

12. A system according to claim 1, wherein the character is encrypted and the user-side apparatus has information for decrypting the character.

5 13. A system according to claim 1, wherein access to the character is restricted and the user-side apparatus has authentication information for enabling access to the character.

10 14. A system according to claim 1, wherein the character is generated and moved by processing character data formed from a plurality of images by executing a character display/control program.

15 15. An information processing apparatus for providing a character to a user-side apparatus, said information processing apparatus comprising:

receiving means for receiving information designating a motion of the character; and

20 computation means for computing a charge for the character on the basis of the motion of the character.

16. An apparatus according to claim 15, wherein said computation means performs the computation on the basis of the amount of movement of the motion.

17. An apparatus according to claim 16, wherein

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the amount of movement is the number of frames in which
a moving image of the character is displayed.

18. An apparatus according to claim 15, wherein
5 said computation means performs the computation on the
basis of the period of times during which the motion is
continued.

19. An apparatus according to claim 15, wherein
10 said computation means performs the computation on the
basis of the number of parts moved in the motion.

20. An apparatus according to claim 15,
wherein said computation means performs the computation
15 on the basis of the amount of change in the motion.

21. An apparatus according to claim 15, wherein
said computation means performs the computation on the
basis of a motion mode of the motion.
20

22. An apparatus according to claim 21, wherein
the motion mode relates to a kind of expression of the
character.

23. An apparatus according to claim 21, wherein
25 the motion mode relates to a kind of method for a
conversation held by the character.

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24. An apparatus according to claim 21, wherein the motion mode relates to a kind of personality of the character.

5 25. An apparatus according to claim 15 further comprising:

measuring means for measuring the motion of the character,

10 wherein said computation means performs the computation on the basis of the measured motion of the character.

26. An apparatus according to claim 15, wherein the character is generated and moved by processing
15 character data formed from a plurality of images by executing a character display/control program.

27. An information processing apparatus provided with characters from a character providing apparatus,
20 said information processing apparatus comprising:

designation means for designating a motion of the character; and

25 display means for displaying the character moving on the basis of the designation by said designation means.

28. An apparatus according to claim 27, wherein

said designation means designates an amount of movement of the motion.

29. An apparatus according to claim 28, wherein
5 the amount of movement is the number of frames in which
a moving image of the character is displayed.

30. An apparatus according to claim 27, wherein
10 said designation means designates a period of time
during which the motion is to be continued.

31. An apparatus according to claim 27, wherein
15 said designation means designates the number of parts
moved in the motion.

32. An apparatus according to claim 27, wherein
said designation means designates an amount of change
in the motion.

20 33. An apparatus according to claim 27, wherein
said designation means designates a motion mode of the
motion.

25 34. An apparatus according to claim 33, wherein
the motion mode relates to a kind of expression of the
character.

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35. An apparatus according to claim 33, wherein the motion mode relates to a kind of method for a conversation held by the character.

5 36. An apparatus according to claim 33, wherein the motion mode relates to a kind of personality of the character.

10 37. An apparatus according to claim 27, wherein the character is encrypted and said apparatus has information for decrypting the character.

15 38. An apparatus according to claim 27, wherein access to the character is restricted and said apparatus has authentication information for enabling access to the character.

20 39. An apparatus according to claim 27, wherein the character is generated and moved by processing character data formed from a plurality of images by executing a character display/control program.

25 40. A method of controlling an information processing apparatus for providing a character to a user-side apparatus, said method comprising the steps of:

receiving information designating a motion of the

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character; and

computing a charge for the character on the basis
of the motion of the character.

5 41. A method of controlling an information
processing apparatus provided with a character from a
character providing apparatus, said method comprising
the steps of:

designating a motion of the character; and

10 displaying the character moving on the basis of
the designation in said designation step.

42. A recording medium on which a program for
controlling an information processing apparatus for
15 providing a character to a user-side apparatus is
stored, said program comprising the steps of:

receiving information designating a motion of the
character; and

20 computing a charge for the character on the basis
of the motion of the character.

43. A recording medium on which a program for
controlling an information processing apparatus
provided with a character from a character providing
25 apparatus is stored, said program comprising the steps
of:

designating a motion of the character; and

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displaying the character moving on the basis of
the designation in said designation step.

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